

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 13 and 14 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 4, 13 and 14 have been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the Applicants regard as their invention. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated **October 22, 2002**.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §102

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 14 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Shibata.

It is interesting that the Office has consistently provided parenthetical insertions to communicate what element in Shibata is the alleged claimed element of the present invention. When it comes to the claimed language of “at least one mark member, readable on any one of posts 9, which serves as an alignment mark located in a predetermined positional relationship with the electrode pads, wherein the mark member is made of the same material with the electrode pads”, the Office fails to communicate by the same type of parenthetical insertions as to where the claimed elements and relationships are disclosed in Shibata.

Perhaps a logical explanation of this inconsistency in practice within the same Office Action is that the claimed features simply cannot be found in Shibata. From reviewing the rejection as applied to claim 14, “a plurality of metal posts” is indicated by the Office Action to be the same as

reference numeral 9 of Shibata. However, “at least one mark member” is also indicated by the Office Action to be the same as reference numeral 9 of Shibata. The Response to argument section further elaborated, consistent with this rejection, that the “mark member” can be any one of the “metal posts.”

The purpose of assigning two different names to two different types of object is to make it abundantly clear that two distinctly different types of element are being claimed. If only one type of element is being claimed, then a same name will be used. By only identifying one type of object as material evidence for anticipating two different types of element is the same as failing to provide material evidence for one of the two different elements.

It is well settled that:

“A claim is anticipated only if each and every element *as set forth in the claim* is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” *Constant v. Advanced Micro-Devices, Inc.*, 848 F.2d 1567, 7 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

For the foregoing reasons, it is clear that the claimed invention is not anticipated by the asserted prior art. However, in the interest of advancing the prosecution of this application, independent claims 1, 4 and 14 are further amended to explicitly expound that the plurality of metal posts and the mark member are not only different and distinct elements with different names, they also have different shapes and sizes. By so amending, the two already distinct elements are even further distinguished from each other, thus further affirms that the claimed invention is patentably

distinguished over Shibata. All claims dependent thereon, by virtue of inherency, also patentably distinguished over Shibata.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Ishikawa et al.

Independent claim 13 has been amended to recited that:

“13. (Three-times Amended) An apparatus for fixing a semiconductor wafer by suction, comprising:

a vacuum chuck table having a porous plate overlaying a plurality of concentric suction grooves;

a plurality of suction passages each being connected to the plurality of concentric suction grooves each barometrically independent from another; and

suctioning device for sequentially introducing a suctioning force into the suction passages at different timing.”

This claim is supported by way of an example in Figure 32A, where there is indeed shown an apparatus for fixing a semiconductor wafer by suction, comprising a vacuum chuck table 90 having a porous plate 94 overlaying a plurality of concentric suction grooves 92a; a plurality of suction passages each being connected to the plurality of concentric suction grooves 92a each barometrically independent from another; and suctioning device for sequentially introducing a suctioning force into the suction passages at different timing.

The features that the plurality of concentric suction grooves 92a each barometrically independent from another, *inter alia*, are not disclosed in the asserted prior art. Therefore, independent claim 13, as amended, patentably distinguished over the asserted prior art.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shibata in view of Nara et al.

Independent claims 1 and 4 are patentably distinguished over Shibata. All claims dependent thereon, including claims 2 and 5, by virtue of inherency, also patentably distinguished over Shibata further in view of whatever other secondary reference.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

New Claim:

New independent claim 15 is added herein. Entry and examination of this claim are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

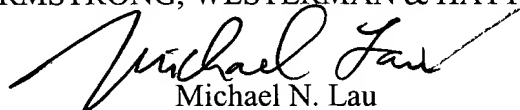
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 1, 4, 13 and 14, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,
ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP


Michael N. Lau

Attorney for Applicant

Reg. No. 39,479

MNL/alw

Atty. Docket No. **000663**

Suite 1000, 1725 K Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20006

(202) 659-2930



23850

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Version with markings to show changes made

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 4, 13 and 14 as follows:

1. (Thrice Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:

a semiconductor element having a plurality of electrodes;

a redistribution layer having a plurality of electrode pads and conductive patterns connecting the electrodes of the semiconductor element to the respective electrode pads;

a plurality of metal posts each with a first shape and a first size formed on the electrode pads of the redistribution layer, the metal posts being configured to be provided with external connection electrodes; and

at least one mark member with a second shape and a second size which serves as an alignment mark located in a predetermined positional relationship with the metal posts,

wherein the mark member is made of the same material as the metal posts; and

wherein the first shape and the first size are correspondingly different from the second shape and the second size.

4. (Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:

a semiconductor element having a plurality of electrodes;

a redistribution layer which connects the electrodes of the semiconductor device to a plurality of electrode pads each with a first shape and a first size located in predetermined positions of the redistribution layer; and

at least one mark member with a second shape and a second size which serves as an alignment mark located in a predetermined positional relationship with the electrode pads[.];

wherein the mark member is made of the same material with the electrode pads; and

wherein the first shape and the first size are correspondingly different from the second shape and the second size.

13. (Three-times Amended) An apparatus for fixing a semiconductor wafer by suction, comprising:

a vacuum chuck table having a porous plate overlaying a plurality of concentric suction grooves;

a plurality of suction passages each being connected to the plurality of concentric suction grooves[, the plurality of concentric suction grooves being divided into a plurality of groups] each barometrically independent from another [so that each of the plurality of suction passages is connected to one of a corresponding suction grooves belonging to one of the plurality of groups]; and

[means] suctioning device for sequentially introducing a suctioning force into the suction passages at different timing.

14. (Amended) A semiconductor device comprising:

a semiconductor element having a plurality of electrodes;

a redistribution layer having a plurality of electrode pads and conductive patterns connecting the electrodes of the semiconductor element to the respective electrode pads;

a plurality of metal posts with a first shape and a first size formed on the electrode pads of the redistribution layer, the metal posts being configured to be provided with external connection electrodes; and

at least one mark member with a second shape and a second size which serves as an alignment mark located in a predetermined positional relationship with the metal posts;

wherein the first shape and the first size are correspondingly different from the second shape and the second size.

[wherein the mark member is made of the same material as the metal posts; and

wherein the mark member is located at a position different from positions of the metal posts.]